



# A threat to competition, consumer choice and connectivity: the reality of the EU Airport Slot Regulation

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**Brussels, 8 May 2023:** The industry body representing Europe's airports, ACI EUROPE, has renewed its call for the European Commission urgently to bring the EU Airport Slot Regulation up to date.

In a letter from ACI EUROPE President and Executive Vice President of AENA, Javier Marín, to EU Transport Commissioner Vălean, the Commission was praised for its ambitious work to date in preparing the ground for a revision of the Regulation currently in place – which is 30 years old.

The Commission must now take the next step and move forwards with a legislative proposal to future-proof the single aviation market.

The current EU Airport Slot Regulation is largely based on principles set by incumbent airlines for incumbent airlines, with airports having no say on the way their capacity is allocated and used. As such, the Regulation reflects an era that is no longer – when national airlines dominated and low-cost carriers had yet to emerge, competition was scarce and airport capacity unconstrained.

The loopholes and deficiencies of the EU Airport Slot Regulation are now plain to see, as stated by **Javier Marín**: *“Practices such as slot hoarding, overbidding, ‘double-dipping’, slot leasing, secondary trading and abuse of the New Entrant rule by multi-airline groups go against the spirit of the single aviation market by limiting competition, connectivity and consumer choice”*.

As Europe accounts for more than half of the world's most congested airports and as congestion is set to worsen since creating new airport capacity is ever more difficult, updating airport slot rules is fundamental to protect the integrity and well-functioning of the single aviation market. This is paramount to safeguard consumer interest and regional connectivity in the context of airline consolidation– through mergers, market exit or attrition.

The European airport industry is not calling for a revolution but for a legitimate, necessary and overdue evolution of airport slot rules.

The full text of the letter sent to Transport Commissioner Vălean and also shared with Competition Commissioner Vestager can be found [here](#).

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**ACI EUROPE** is the European region of Airports Council International (ACI), the only worldwide professional association of airport operators. ACI EUROPE represents over 500 airports in 55 countries. Our members facilitate over 90% of commercial air traffic in Europe. Air transport supports 13.5 million jobs, generating €886 billion in European economic activity (4.4% of GDP). In response to the Climate Emergency, in June 2019 our members committed to achieving Net Zero carbon emissions for operations under their control by 2050, without offsetting.